

gives expression to these activities. That the GAZETTE has been better than its promise is the record of the year just closing, and as we clear our decks for another year it is with the determination to surpass anything we have yet done. With this promise to our friends we wish them a happy and successful new year.

THERE IS some feeling among American botanists that their labors are not fully recognized in Europe, being passed by when credit is really due them. We desire to point out one reason for this apparent neglect, a reason that our opportunities of knowing enable us to assert is a very important one, and which points to partial remedy within the control of each author. We refer to the distribution of separately printed copies of important articles contained in journals and society publications. We venture to say that the number of copies now sent by most authors to German and other foreign investigators is very small and wholly inadequate. A satisfactory distribution would require that a copy of every important research should be sent to other workers in the same line, to the prominent botanical periodicals, and to the chief libraries. If it can also be placed on sale, so much the better. If authors will take this small trouble and expense, the knowledge and recognition of American botany abroad will be advantageously improved.

OPEN LETTERS.

Orientation of Cassia leaflets.

The region about me is literally clothed with a growth of the two species of Cassia, *C. nictitans* and *C. Chamæcrista*. I notice this summer what I never happened to have observed before, that, in the afternoon especially, all the leaflets are so disposed as to present their surfaces to the declining sun. In thousands of specimens I can find no exception. This presentation of necessity gives something of a north and south trend to the edge of the leaflets, so here we have compass plants of a certain kind.

W. W. BAILEY.

Brown University, Providence, R. I.

Eupatorium perfoliatum.

In August last I collected a stout specimen of this plant, nearly four feet high, having a whorl of three leaves at each node. The leaves of each whorl were united around the stem much as in the usual form, except that there was a superfluity of tissue at the points of cohesion, thus making the bases of the leaves crispate.

J. FRANKLIN COLLINS.

Providence, R. I.

CURRENT LITERATURE.

Life Histories of Plants. By Professor D. McAlpine. pp. 296. Illustrated. Swan Sonnenschein, Lowrey & Co., London. 1886. sq. 12°.

This is a successful attempt to put the latest phases of botany in such a popular way that any intelligent person can understand them. Such attempts can not be too warmly commended, for they are important and difficult. As the intelligent popular mind becomes acquainted with these facts the chances for foundations for original investigation multiply, but the difficulty lies in